

**Statement of  
The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Hearing on  
“Reauthorization of the  
John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts”  
September 27, 2007**

I extend a warm welcome to Mr. Michael Kaiser, President of the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, a world-recognized, preeminent performing arts institution and iconic landmark here in the District of Columbia. Mr. Kaiser has presided over the Center's transformation, both in terms of architecture and programming.

The building's 1.5 million square feet on 17 acres have been upgraded, refigured, and transformed to more easily and graciously accommodate the Center's two million annual visitors and patrons. Mr. Kaiser is to be commended for giving his committed, personal attention, not only to the Center's programmatic side but also the more mundane “bricks and mortar” side that makes up the Presidential Memorial. He has not lost sight of the fact that first and foremost, this building is a memorial to President John F. Kennedy, and we are grateful for his watchfulness.

Today we will begin the process of authorizing appropriations for the Center for a period of five years. The appropriations will support the capital needs, as well as the operations and maintenance of the building. Operations costs include utilities, fire protection and systems, ADA requirements, heating, ventilation, cooling, and plumbing. Capital requirements are centered around renovation of the larger spaces, such as the Grand Foyer, the entire roof, and the reconfiguring of the plaza at the front of the building. Traffic flow and pedestrian access were improved by adding a grand stair case and a new vehicular circulation pattern.

I am eager to hear from the President of the Center, and I especially want to hear how the Center is becoming more energy efficient.

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